

## Summary of Meeting

### Attendance

|                          |                                      |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nikki DeMarce, Associated Industries | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dick Mettler, NW Wall & Ceiling Contr Assoc |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | DeAnne Edwards, Pederson Fryer Farms | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rob Sumner, Timber Operator's Council       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Steve George, Hop Growers of WA      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gene Vosberg, Washington Restaurant Assoc   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Joe Hawkins, Bekins Northwest        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tom Kwieciak, Bldg Industry Assoc of WA     |

☐ = Present

(Meeting could not be called to order as committee bylaws require a minimum of 6 voting members to constitute a quorum; therefore, no official business was conducted. Speakers made informal presentations to members and guests in attendance. Following summary is provided for informational purposes only.)

**Introductions / Minutes** – Although an informational meeting was held, the committee did not convene on August 12, 1997 as had been scheduled, due to the lack of a quorum. A summary of the information informally presented on 08/12/97 was distributed in lieu of minutes. The minutes of 06/10/97 will be presented to the committee for approval at the December 9, 1997 meeting.

**Risk Management Services** – *Diane Doherty* provided an update on positions and functions affected by the shifting of 59 positions into claims administration (e.g., vocational consultants, therapist consultants and loss control consultants). As a result of these changes, vocational and therapist consultants will be working with employers only as specific claims arise, rather than pro-actively, as they have in the past. Loss control consultations continue to be available to employers who request them. Employer workshops previously scheduled through 7/98 will not be affected. A return-to-work handbook for employers will soon be available from the agency.

**Claims Improvement Initiative** – *Jody Moran* discussed the reallocation of positions within the claims administration area. Approximately forty-three positions will become adjudicator 1, 2 and 3, and twelve will become level 4 and 5 adjudicators. They anticipate the average caseload of 326 claims per adjudicator will be reduced to approximately 244 apiece for level 2 claim managers (CM's), and level 3 workloads should diminish from 209 to 166 claims per adjudicator. Three claim manager training classes are in progress, with another scheduled to begin on October 27. The goal is to have at least half of them hired and trained (or in training) by January '98. They plan to assign a mixture of old and new CM's in the units to facilitate on-the-job training and mentoring. Currently, an ad-hoc committee is examining ways to improve the claims program; another committee is working on MIPS (medical bill payment) functions. The agency will be requesting 24 additional FTE's in the upcoming supplemental budget package.

**Drug-Free Workplace** – *Laura Goshorn* gave a brief overview of the pilot project. Approximately 160 employers joined the program when it was first offered; there are currently 360 businesses participating. A report will be sent to the legislature next week, and copies will be sent to the retro advisory committee members as well. Based on feedback from employers, many of them feel the 5 percent discount received on their industrial insurance premium does not justify the cost of setting up and administering a drug-free workplace program for their employees.

**Updates** – *Kathy Willis* discussed the recent staff changes in retro. *Ervin Smith* has replaced *Carla Reynolds*, as she has returned to Employer Services. *Karen Peterson* is currently assisting with the training of new claim managers, and will return to retro in approximately six months.

Kathy reviewed the proposed 1997 supplemental budget requests for external access and for claims caseloads. The request to expand external access would build upon the foundation established in the pilot by adding more features requested by existing users and by providing access to a wider range of customers. This budget request is for \$844,273, which includes three (3) FTE's. The proposed supplemental budget package for claims caseloads contains a request for twenty-four (24) additional claim manager positions to reduce the high caseloads. The cost of this package is \$1.7 million.

Kathy also gave an update on the workers compensation performance audit, reviewing the scope of work for the audit. Currently, work is being done to obtain a contractor to do the audit.

**Future of Retro** – *Bill White* and *Kathy Willis* talked briefly on the current state of retro, and touched on various areas and topics related to future growth of the program. Bill shared information regarding the growth of the retro program. Currently, there are approximately 66 associations, and retro participants represent 42 percent of the total State Fund premium. Due to the tremendous growth, it is time to review how the program is working and to plan for the future. Of specific interest, is review of the requirements for establishment of retro groups, and to examine options for administering the homogeneous requirement. Bill explained that one of the ideas being explored would be to use broad industry groupings of risk classes to define the homogeneous requirement. The advisory committee needs to be actively involved in this planning effort, and a broad list of stakeholders will be utilized for feedback regarding any proposals or suggested changes.

**Retro Symposium** – The upcoming retro symposium will take place on Thursday, October 30, 1997, from 1:00 to 4:00 PM at the Governor's Industrial Safety & Health Conference, located at the Seattle Center. You do not need to register for the conference if you plan to only attend the symposium.

**Meeting concluded** at 3:23 PM.